AKIRA 36™

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AKIRA

BY KATSUHIRO OTOMO

Chapter 36

MIYAKO'S LAST STAND

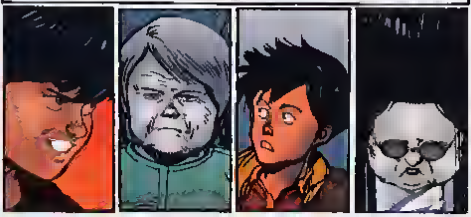
WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

2030. The world hovers on the brink of World War IV. **Kaneda**, onetime leader of a delinquent gang, is caught up in the aftermath of a power struggle between a Japanese military research organization — led by a man known only as the **Colonel** — and a resistance group whose members included **Kay**, **Ryu** and a formidable woman named **Chiyoko**.

The **Colonel** once controlled a number of psychic children, each identified by a number marked on the hand. Among them were **Kiyoko** and **Masaru** — Numbers 25 and 27. The blind **Lady Miyako** — **Number 19** — now heads a great religious cult. **Number 41** is **Tetsuo**, who lost his left arm to a laser blast from the Colonel's SOL military satellite, and has used cybernetics and telekinesis to fabricate a prosthetic replacement. **Tetsuo** was Kaneda's dearest friend until he used his burgeoning powers to slaughter other members of their gang. Now, **Kaneda** is out for revenge.

Most powerful of all the children is **Number 28** — **Akira** — a docile and enigmatic boy who was placed in cryogenic sleep almost forty years ago, after he started the Third World War with a mental blast. He was recently reawakened by **Tetsuo**, and again he devastated the reconstructed city of **Neo-Tokyo**. Now Japan exists in a state of emergency. The forces of the army and the resistance are scattered, and the military's formidable caretaker robots patrol the streets.

In the western part of **Neo-Tokyo**, the **Great Tokyo Empire** is formed — a monarchy with **Akira** on the throne and **Tetsuo** as his prime minis-



Kaneda | Masaru | Kai | Lady Miyako

tsu. Together the pair use their powers, organizing their subjects into fighting units to defend their land. Their headquarters is Neo-Tokyo's Olympic Stadium. To the east, **Lady Miyako** welcomes refugees to her shrine. In this, she is aided by **Kiyoko**, **Masaru**, and a number of loyal, psychic monks.

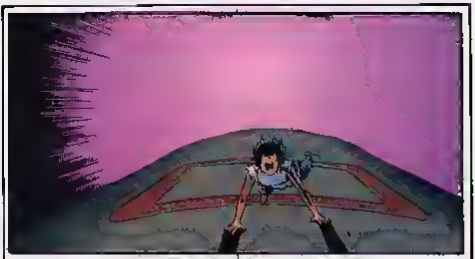
The **Empire** is infiltrated by teams of spies and commando units from the outside world, equipped with biochemical armaments which take a tremendous toll on Tetsuo's forces.

A fleet of foreign ships waits in Tokyo Bay, poised for action. Aboard an American naval vessel, an international conclave of scientists and one Tibetan monk study the **Akira** phenomenom — which they've codenamed Juvenile A. One of the scientists — **Stanley Simmons** goes ashore to implement a secret plan. The research team is certain that using military force against **Akira** and **Tetsuo** can only lead to disaster.

Meanwhile, **Kay** joins Miyako's forces in battle against **Tetsuo**. **Kay** is a powerful medium, through whom the others can project their powers and strike as one.

Kaneda teams up with **Kai** and **Joker** — a rival from his gang days. Using salvaged weapons the trio lead a force of

Tetsuo **Stanley Simmons** **Akira** **Joker**



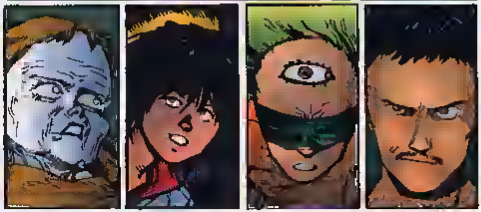
refugees and street rats to help Kay in her battle with **Tetsuo**. As they fight, **Akira** looks placidly on.

Then, the international fleet in the harbor sends fighter planes to rain death upon **Neo-Tokyo**, causing chaos among all the combatants. Enraged, **Tetsuo** teleports himself to space, seizing control of an orbiting laser cannon. He fires the weapon at the fleet, and then brings it crashing down upon the flagship, killing the commanders and forcing mass evacuation of military personnel and the few scientists who survive.

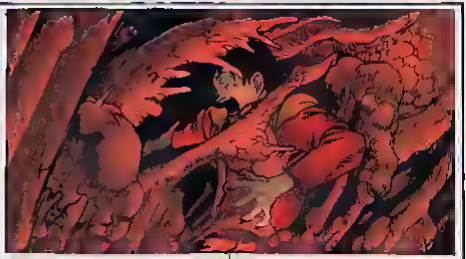
Griefstricken over the death of his gentle girlfriend, **Kaori**, **Tetsuo** carries her body to the underground chamber where **Akira** once slept. Drawn by the similarity of their powers, **Akira** follows **Tetsuo**. Along the way, he is joined by **Kaaeda**, **Joker**, **Chiyoko** and **Ryu**. They plan to fight in the bowels of the earth, where many of their comrades died.

Tetsuo's powers have grown erratic. His body frequently bloats and expands, engulfing those who venture too close. For a moment, it seems that contact with **Kaneda** has restored Tetsuo's humanity. Then, his power comes surging back, and Kaneda is drawn into his monstrous form, apparently consumed. As the battle rages, **Akira** becomes more alert. Terrified of what might occur if **Akira** fully awakes, **Ryu** panics. He draws a gun and shoots **Akira**, setting the boy's power free.

Seeking a new power source for himself, **Tetsuo** flies to Lady Miyako's shrine, with **Kay** in hot pursuit. **Lady Miyoko** instructs **Kiyoko** and **Masaru** to look after **Akira**.



Kiyoko | Kaori | Seer | Ryu



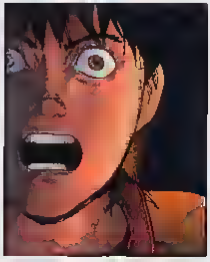
and the pair teleport away to help their friend. **Lady Miyako**, her followers, and **Kay** prepare to make a final stand against **Tetsuo.**

Kiyako and **Masaru** meet **Akira** on the psychic plane, and are joined by the spirits of all the gifted children who have died before, hoping to use Akira's power once more.

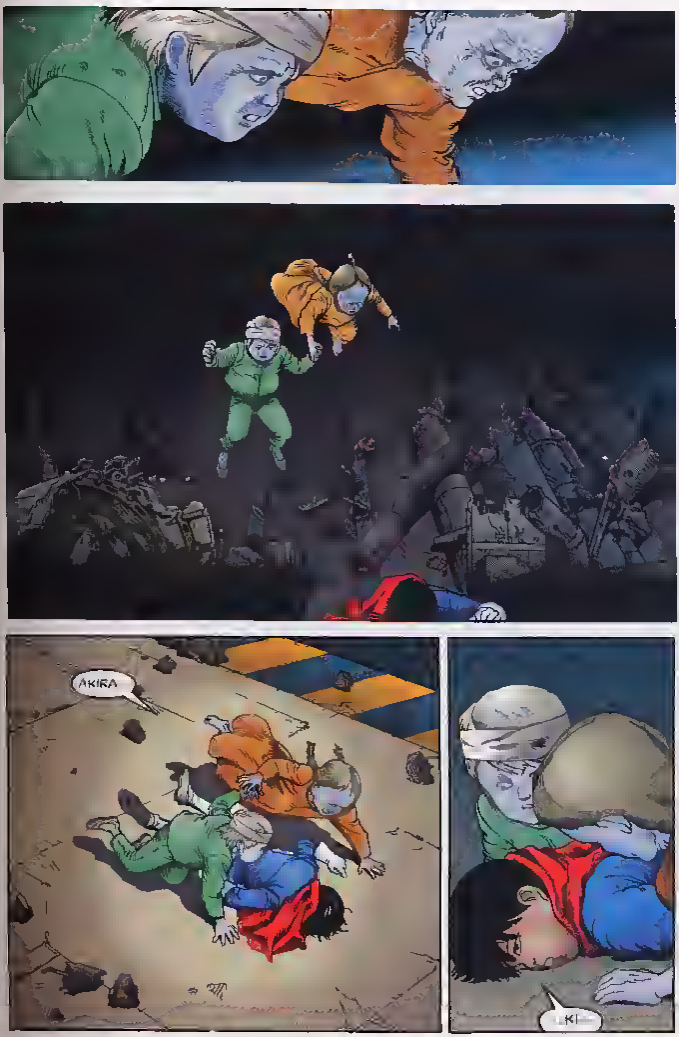
Telling **Kay** that the resolution depends on her, **Lady Miyako** heroically draws Tetsuo's attention to herself and is killed. As she dies, she, too, is drawn to the spirit plane where the souls of friends who have gone before await. **Kay** is guided in battle by her late mentor's commands, and is able to break through to **Tetsuo.** His concentration interrupted, he is vulnerable, and is himself consumed by force from Akira's mind.

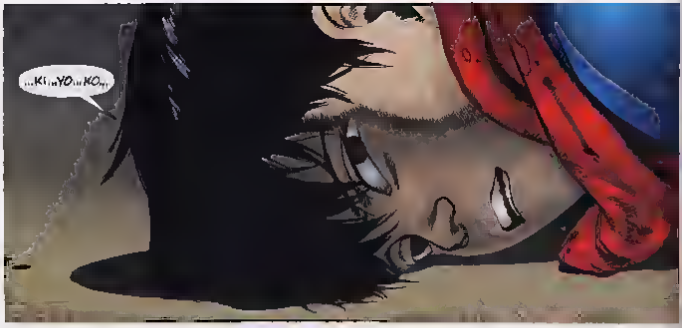
Trapped within Tetsuo's soul, **Kaneda** experiences a fractured, kaleidoscopic journey through his late friend's life and hardships, sharing with **Tetsuo** both the good memories and the bad.

Kaneda is contacted by Lady Miyako's spirit, and is stunned by what she is told. Although **Tetsuo** and **Akira** were created in laboratories, they, and all the catastrophe they bring, are a vital part of mankind's future evolution.



Chiyoko | The Colonel | Kay | Lt. Yamada

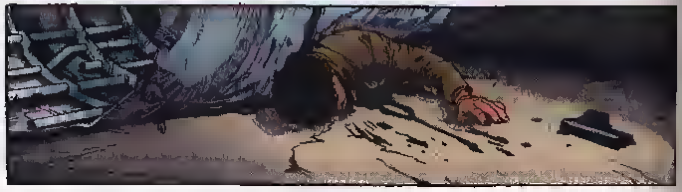

AKIRA
KI

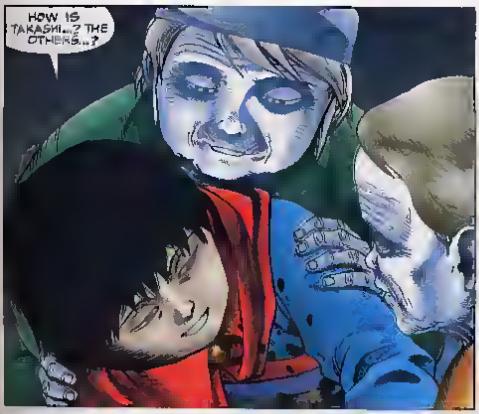

...KI...YO...KO...

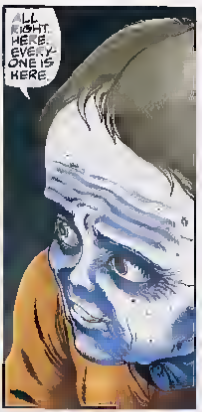
AKIRA! YOU'RE AWAKE!

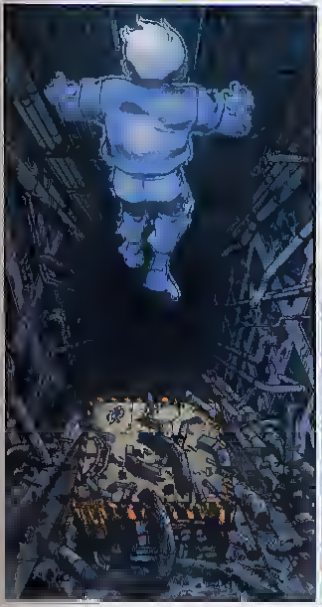
MASARU...

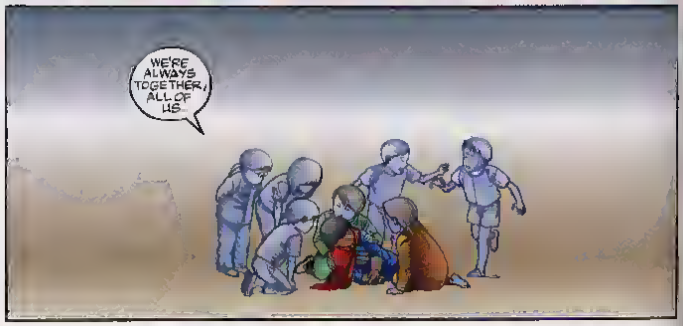
YOU CAN HEAR US, RIGHT AKIRA? YOU UNDER-STAND!



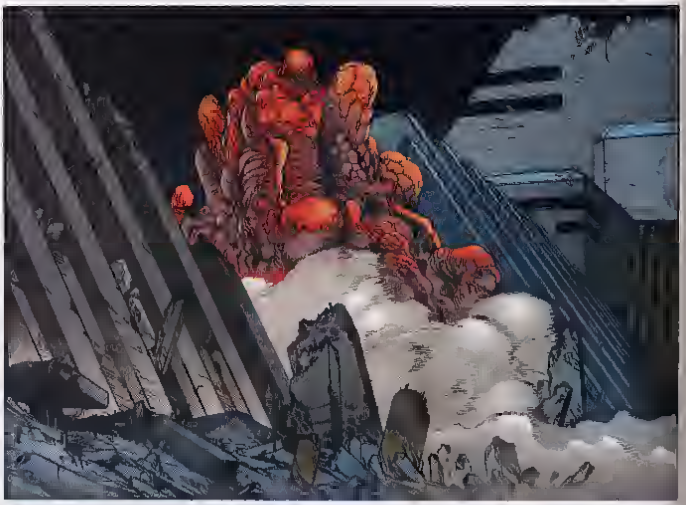

HOW IS TAKASHI...? THE OTHERS...?

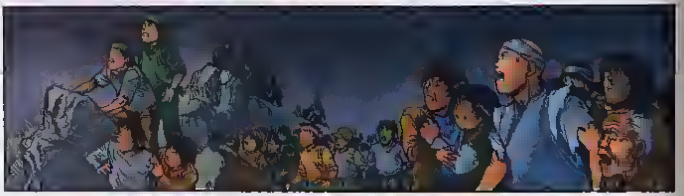

ALL RIGHT. HE'S HERE. EVERY-ONE IS HERE.



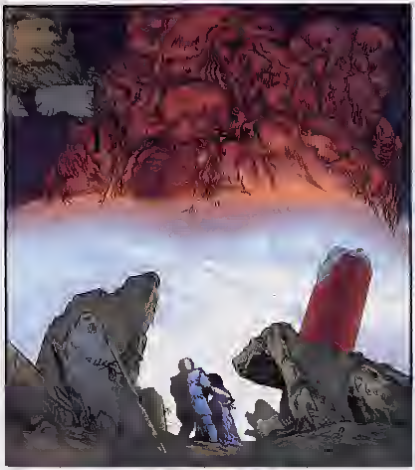

WE'RE ALWAYS TOGETHER, ALL OF US.

CAN YOU USE THE POWER?
AKIRA.
UH-HUH.





HRRRN!
THAM
MY POWER FADES...!
KAAAAY!

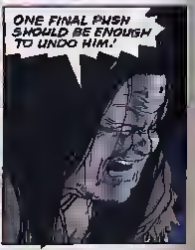


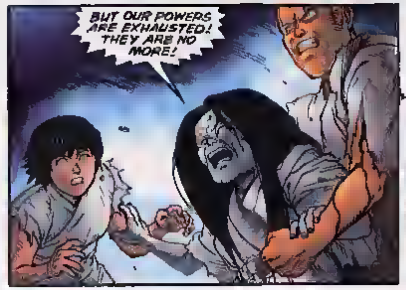
IT SEEMS THE BEAST CAN'T MAINTAIN ITS HUMAN FORM.

TAK

!

LADY MIYAKO!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME, KAY. LISTEN


ONE FINAL PUSH SHOULD BE ENOUGH TO UNDO HIM.!

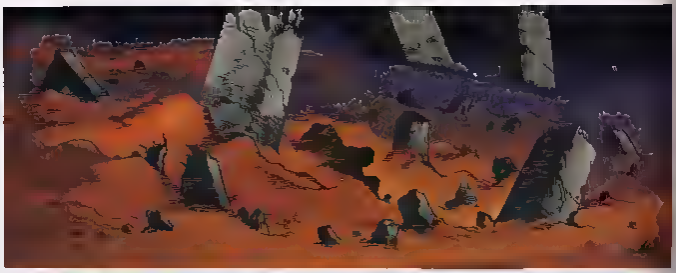

BUT OUR POWERS ARE EXHAUSTED! THEY ARE NO MORE!

ONLY YOURS REMAINS!
IT'S UP TO YOU TO END THIS!

KRASH
IF WE WERE ABLE TO USE YOU, WE MAY YET PREVAIL!
I UNDERSTAND.
THEN GO!
ZZZM
OOOUUUUU.
AND WHAT EVER SHALL BE SHALL BE!

BA
BOOOM
OOOOUU!
FOOOM

BADOOOM
RUMMBLE
YAAUGH!



.....

NOT...YET...
TO DIE NOW...
...WOULD BE THE COWARDS WAY.

SOL-

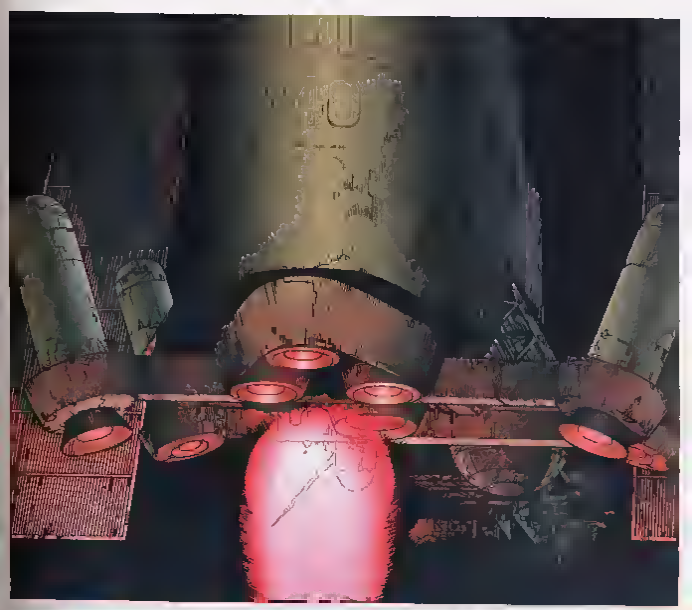
SUN-7681
SOL

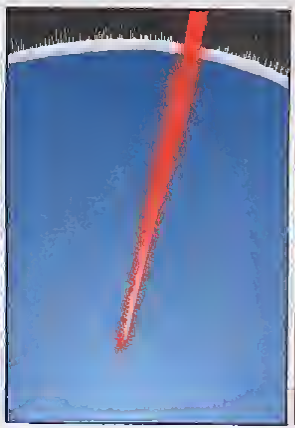
WHY DO YOU HESITATE?! I'M RIGHT BEFORE YOU!

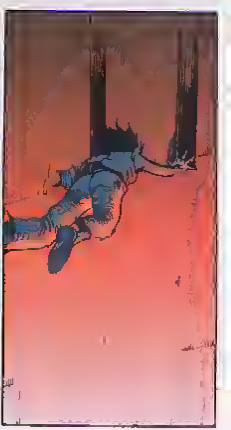
HAH!
BWASH
OOH!!
GLUP

HAHAHAHAHAH!
GIK--!
GLUGK

THOP
...SA...KA...KI...
WHUD
SSSHF



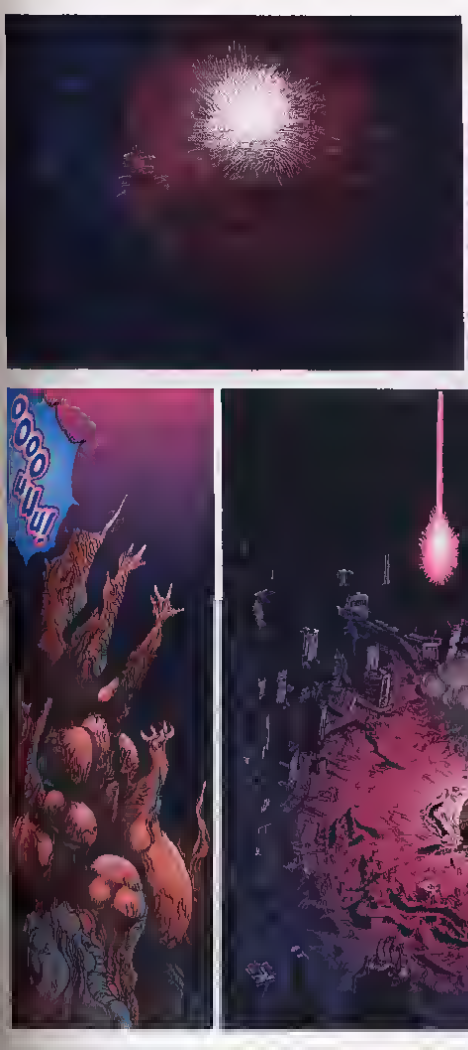


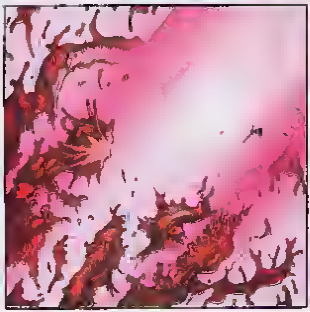


SSSS

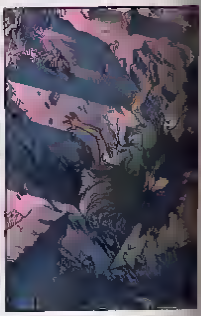
OOOUUU!
...KAY...
DIRECT IT TOWARD ME...
I'LL GUIDE YOU...
WHERE I LIE...
YOU MUST STRIKE!

B-BUT I CANNOT DESTROY YOUR TEMPLE...
WHOEVER IS HERE, DON'T HESITATE!
DO AS YOU MUST!


WHAT'S THAT LIGHT IN THE SKY?!
SOMETHING'S COMING!
OOOOUU!!

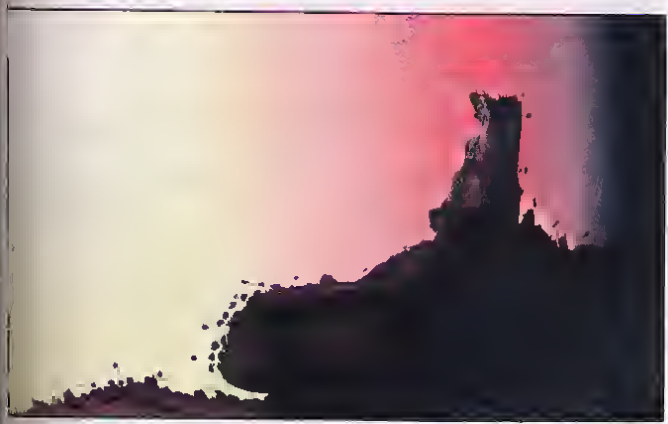


IT MOVED ASIDE !!!



KRADAK

NOW WHAT?
WHAT'S THAT GLOW?



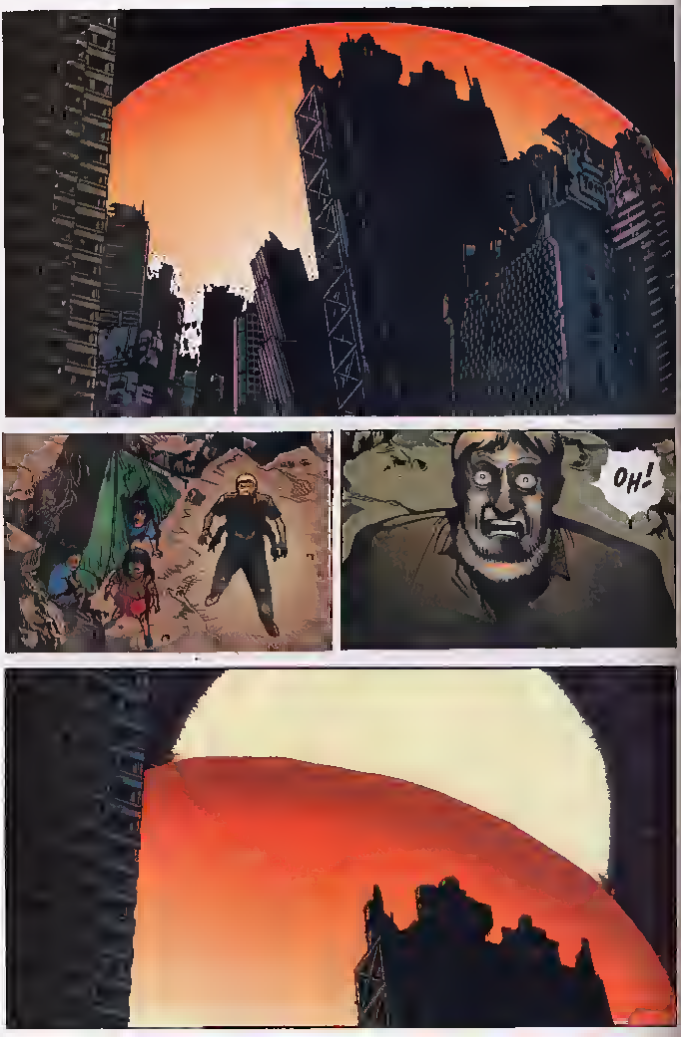
YOU'RE SENTIENT, AREN'T YOU?

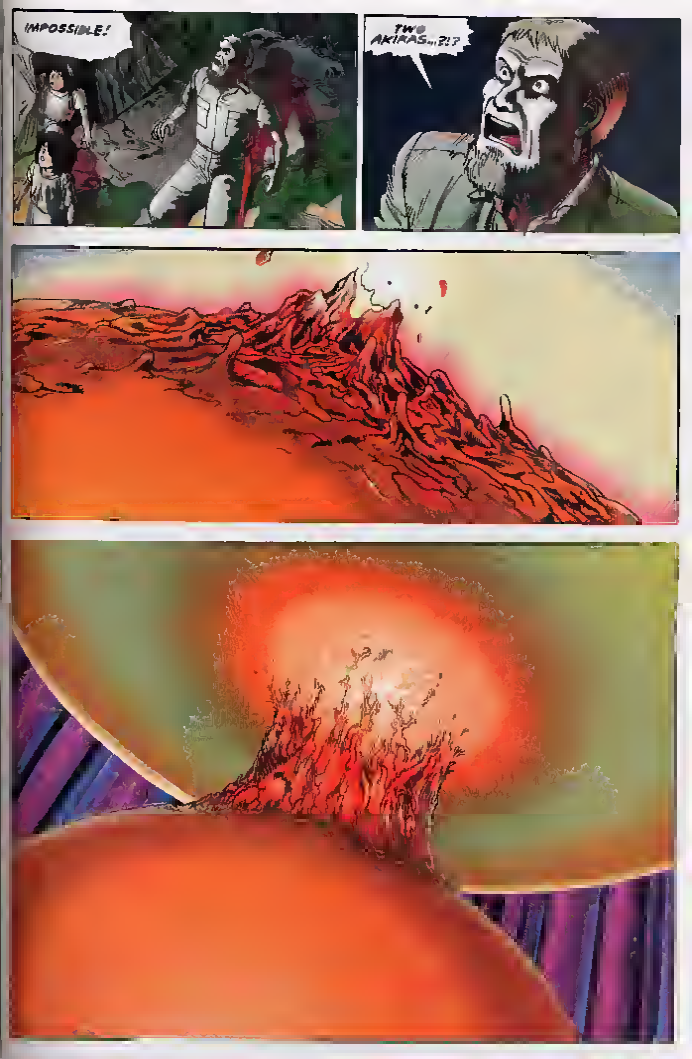
RRUMMBLE

SO...
IT IS BEGUN.
GONGONGONG
KRASH
SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHIN' BIG IS GOIN' ON!
TETSUO OR AK RA?

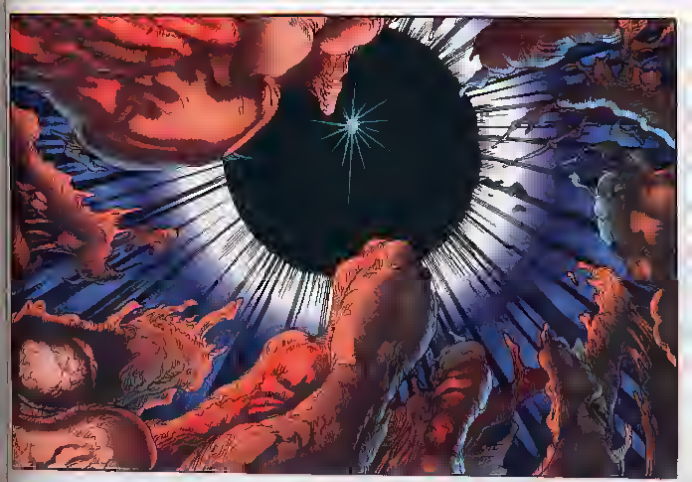
WHAT ABOUT AKIRA?

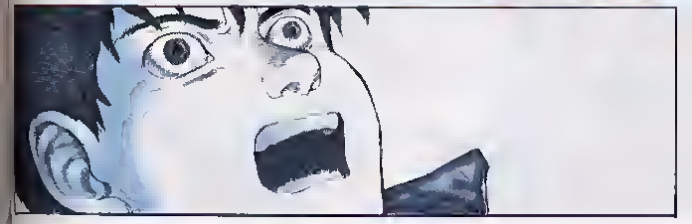
FLASH


OH!


IMPOSSIBLE!
TWO AKIRAS...?!?

AKIRA IS SURROUNDING AND ENGULFING IT!





UH-OH!

AAAGGH!

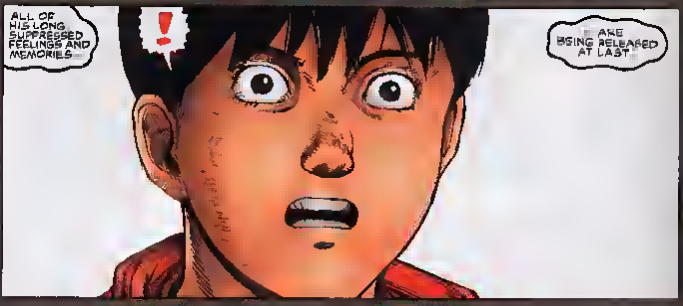
TETSUO!!
WHAT'S HAPPENED TO YOU?!
CAN YOU HEAR ME?
KA...
OR!!
...MONSTER IS THIS CALLED ALL...
TETSUO... IS THAT YOU?
...WE DAI!!
THIS IS THE TIME...
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR!
HURRY
A DREAM
LOOK...
I'VE GOT MY ARM BACK
WE'LL USE PIC 24 LEET INTO YOUR GEAR
AMERICAN SOLDIERS HAVE US UNDER ATTACK
DO YOU SAY IT'S A DREAM?
THIS IS NO DREAM!
TO CONTROL YOUR POWER YOU MUST ACCEPT YOUR OWN WEAKNESS!
PLEASE...USE YOUR POWER TO DEFEND US!
THIS GAS WAS DEVELOPED THROUGH GENETIC ENGINEERING
WHAT WAS THAT?
AS FAR AWAY AS POSSIBLE!
HAHHHHH!
I...
I AM HERE!
RIGHT?
IF THAT'S WHO IT WAS...
HE MAY HAVE BEEN TRYING TO ESCAPE THE RESTRAINTS YOU PLACED ON HIM
HIS BODY CAN NO LONGER CONTAIN THE BURGEONING POWER SO IT SEEMS TO POSSESS A GREATER FORM
AREN'T YOU KAY?
WHAT ABOUT THE MOON?
I'M NOT ALONE
WHY DID YOU--?
WHAT--?!
COME ON AND TRY IT, ASSHOLES!
I'VE HAD ENOUGH!
HAIL, LORD AKIRA!
LORD AKIRA!
LOCATED BENEATH THE CONSTRUCTION FOR THE NEW OLYMPIC STADIUM
YOU SAW IT, TOO.
YOU CAN READ MY THOUGHTS?
IT'S A COMPLETE FAILURE!
I REALIZE NOW HE WAS A HERO TO BOTH OF THEM.
ALL OF THIS WILL FADE AWAY!
BY THE TIME HE WAKES IT WILL BE TOO LATE
ASCHE SCHE
HOW DO YOU KNOW ABOUT AKIRA?!
IT'S AN ILLUSION! ALL OF IT!

YAMAGATAAA!
SO YOU'VE COME BACK.
...NUMBER 41?
POOR LITTLE TETSUO!
YAMAGATA!
YAHAHA!
DON'T SWALLOW THAT!
IT'S A CURTAIN FOR YOU, WANNA TRY IT?
GONNA PARTY TONIGHT!
SINCE WHEN DO YOU GIVE ORDERS HERE?
SAY WHAT?
LET'S RACE THOSE BIKES TILL THEY FLY!
FEH! HERE, ON WE TAKE IT AS IT COMES!
STOP TREATING ME LIKE SUCH A BABY!
YOU'RE STILL JUST A KID.
HE THINKS SOME MIND-ALTERING DRUG RUNNING THE FAST TWENTY-FOUR HOURS.
STOP FOLLOWING ME EVERYWHERE!
WHILE WE DON'T WANT TO NEGLECT ACADEMICS...
OUR MAIN GOAL IS THE TEACHING OF PEACE OF MAN WALLIES.
YOUR FIRST TIME, HUH?
HEY, TETSUO! HELP'S UP!
AND TETSUO SHIMA WILL BE YOUR NEW FRIEND...
I DON'T WANNA GO!
NO!
DON'T MAKE ME GO!
HE CRIES AND CRIES TILL I CAN'T STAND IT. IT'S NOT AS THOUGH HE WERE MY REAL CHILD.
WHY WON'T DAD COME AND SEE ME?
THE FOOL!

¡SOB... SOB!¿

TETSUO...

IS ALL THIS
JUST A DREAM YOU'RE HAVING?

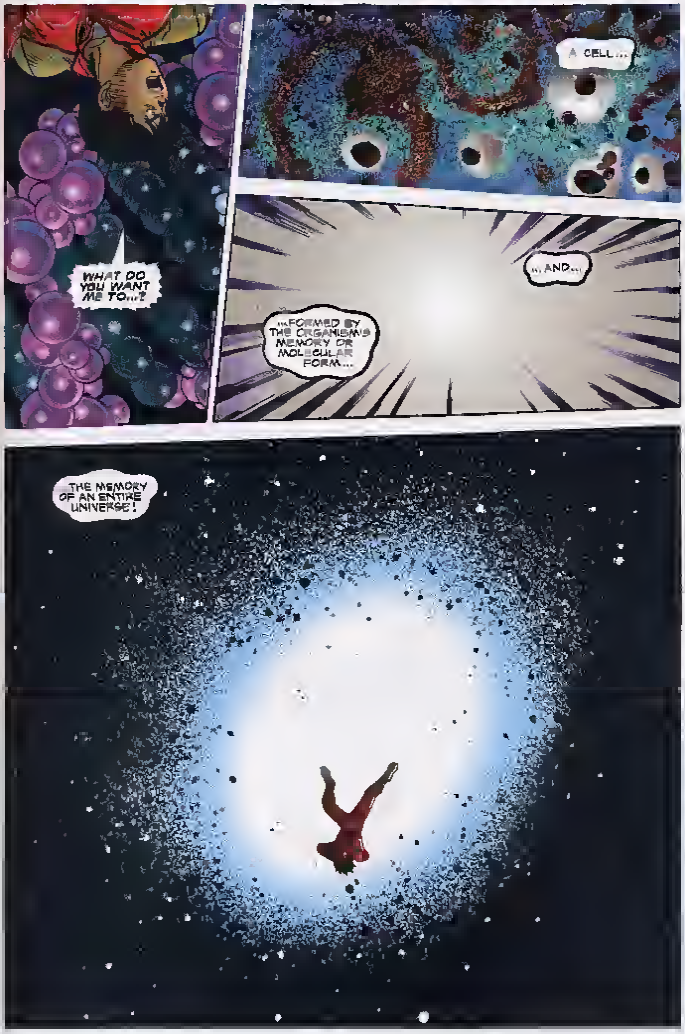

ALL OF HIS LONG SUPPRESSED FEELINGS AND MEMORIES...
AKE BEING RELEASED AT LAST...

MIYAKO!
AND YOU ARE A PART OF IT ALL!
IS TETSUO'S LIFE FLASHING BEFORE HIS EYES? LIKE HE'S GONNA...?
FREED FROM THE SHACKLES OF HIS BODY
HIS MIND HAS REACHED A SPIRITUAL PLANE

LOOK INTO THE HEART...

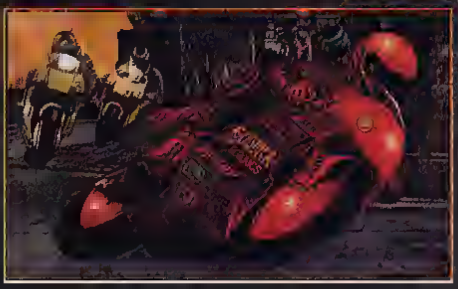
OF LIFE'S MOST PRIMAL MEMORIES

A LIFE FORM THAT HAS GROWN AND DEVELOPED DURING COUNTLESS, REPETITIOUS EONS...
WOULDN'T YOU AGREE THAT IT HAS EVOLVED IN WAYS...
...THAT ARE FAR BEYOND THAT FOR WHICH MERE HAPPENSTANCE AND CIRCUMSTANCE ALONE COULD ACCOUNT?


WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO...?
A CELL...
...AND...
...FORMED BY THE ORGANISM'S MEMORY OR MOLECULAR FORM...
THE MEMORY OF AN ENTIRE UNIVERSE!

Coming next month:

AKIRA TRIBUTE ISSUE.



Featuring art and stories by creators from tha West including Moebius, John Romita, Jo Duffy, Mark Texiera, Larry Hama, Bret Blevins, Warran Ellis, Terry Shoemaker, Kent Williams, John Van Fleet, George Pratt, Alex Toth, Michael Allred, Joe Madureira, Mark Chiarallo and Mitch O'Connell.

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MARIE JAVINS
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editor in chief

The end is near, for the signs have come to pass, look and you may see them too. In a place dancing with stars a young girl known as Kay commands a machine that spits down fire born in the sun. A triad of children hovers over the city of Neo-Tokyo, weaving strategies of extraordinary forces. The streets below rumble as mental energies collide with the physical, remaking a world. Cut off from her flock, a leader named Lady Miyako screams of salvation and sacrifice. And inside what was once a boy called Tetsuo, things sinister and spiritual battle for control of a human soul.

KATSUHIRO OTOMO'S

AKIRA

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